

MEETING OF  
THE DELAWARE AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

A meeting of the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation was held at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, 2320 S. DuPont Hwy., Dover, Delaware, January 16, 2013, with the following members in attendance:

Robert F. Garey, Chairman	Ed Kee, Secretary of Agriculture
William Vanderwende, Vice Chairman	Lisa Embert representing Chip Flowers, Jr., State Treasurer
Robert Emerson	Michael Valenti representing Steve Ditmer, Forestry Council

Absent: William H. "Chip" Narvel, Jr., L. Allen Messick, Jr., Kevin Coyle, and Theodore P. Bobola, Jr.

The following staff members were in attendance: Austin Short, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, and Chief of Planning, Howard Mesick, Scott Blaier, Cathy Mesick, Ashley Spangler, and Robin West.

Others in attendance: F. Michael Parkowski and Ms. Maria S. Knirk.

Chairman Garey opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m., and mentioned that both Mr. Narvel and Mr. Messick recently had experienced the death of close family members.

Secretary Kee introduced Maria Knirk who is working in the Secretary's Office as a law student intern until April. She is considering a career in agricultural law.

**I. Current Situation Report:**

Robin West informed the Board that we have a total of 1,116 farms in preservation districts totaling 157,693 acres, with a total of 754 farms under agricultural easements totaling 110,820 acres at a cost of \$198,321,143. For PDR 18, there are a total of 90 farms, comprising 8,554 acres, with a value of \$48,933,386. For the Forestland Preservation Program there are 37 Forestland Preservation Areas comprising 2,711 acres. For the Forestland Preservation Area Easements, there are a total of 9 properties, comprising 872 acres, with a value of \$1,450,804. For the Young Farmers Program there are a total of 10 Young Farmers program loans which have settled, with an easement value of \$3,878,524. Forty-Eight prequalification applications have been received so far with only two being unapproved – one due to lack of farming experience and one exceed the maximum (\$300,000) net worth.

Mr. Emerson asked how many acres within the Agricultural Lands Preservation easements were forested. Austin Short replied that approximately 28 percent of the land is forested. Robin West agreed to include this information on the next Current Situation Report.

Robin West introduced Ashley Spangler who is replacing Kathi in her work with Robin.

**II. Monitoring Report:**

Milton Melendez informed the Board that he will start monitoring properties later on this month and have a monitoring report for the February 2013 meeting.

**III. Young Farmers Report:**

Austin Short informed the Board that staff received the appraisals for the five properties in Round Two of the Young Farmers Program. The maximum loan amount (70 percent of the appraised development values) for all five properties is \$1.1 million, which is the amount that staff had estimated. The loan application period for Round 3 ends on March 31 and staff has received one partial loan application to date, but more are anticipated.

**IV. District Eligibility:**

1. Wheatley Farms, Inc. District, ID#S-12-11-267. After discussion, **Lisa Embert moved to accept for eligibility the Wheatley Farms, Inc. District, seconded by Ed Kee. Motion unanimously approved.**

Milton Melendez noted that this farm is within the town limits of Bridgeville. Mike Parkowski stated that this was not the first District to be within a municipality. There are three or four other Districts which are also within town/city limits, some of which are under easement.

**V. Expansion Eligibility & Final Approval:**

1. Hitching Rail Expansion of the C.E. Lynch & Sons, Inc. District, ID#KS-12-09-030C. After discussion, **William Vanderwende moved to accept for eligibility/final approval, the Hitching Rail Expansion of the C.E. Lynch & Sons, Inc. District, seconded by Lisa Embert. Motion unanimously approved.**
2. Atkinson Expansion of the Hanson Agricultural Lands District, ID#K-12-11-044S. After discussion, **Ed Kee moved to accept for eligibility/final approval the Atkinson Expansion of the Hanson Agricultural Lands District, seconded by Robert Emerson. Motion unanimously approved.**
3. Hudson Expansion of the Baxter Farms, Inc. – Lowes Crossroads District, ID#S-12-08-038A. After discussion, **Lisa Embert moved to accept for eligibility/final approval the Hudson Expansion of the Baxter Farms, Inc. – Lowes Crossroads District, seconded by Robert Emerson. Motion unanimously approved.**
4. R. Gehman Expansion of the Ledhenham-Vanderwende District, ID#S-12-07-150O. After discussion, **William Vanderwende moved to accept for eligibility/final approval the R. Gehman Expansion of the Ledhenham-Vanderwende District, ID#S-12-07-150O, seconded by Lisa Embert. Motion unanimously approved.**

**VI. Secretary of Agriculture's Veto:**

Secretary of Agriculture Ed Kee waived the right of veto for the above Expansions and District.

**VII. Public Comments:**

No public comments were received.

**VIII. Minutes:**

Chairman Garey asked if there were any comments or changes to the December 4, 2012 minutes. Hearing no changes, the Chairman asked for a motion to approve the minutes. **William Vanderwende moved to approve the December minutes, seconded by Lisa Embert. Motion unanimously approved.**

**IX. Financial Highlights:**

Howard Mesick presented the Financial Statement for the month of November 30, 2012, informing the Foundation Board that we had, as of November 30, 2012, \$29,318.84 in the Foundation's interest bearing State of Delaware account. Interest income was \$18.48, rollback taxes received \$134.76, and license plate monies received in November totaled \$315. Expenditures for the month of November totaled \$30,642.83. After discussion, **Robert Emerson moved to accept the November financial statement as presented, seconded by Lisa Embert. Motion unanimously approved.**

Howard Mesick next presented the Financial Statement for the month of December 31, 2012, informing the Foundation Board that we had, as of December 31, 2012, \$29,644.85 in the Foundation's interest bearing State of Delaware account. Interest income was \$11.01, and license plate monies received in December totaled \$315.00. Expenditures for the month of December totaled \$35,331.81. After discussion, **Ed Kee moved to accept the December financial statement as presented, seconded by Lisa Embert. Motion unanimously approved.**

Howard Mesick then handed out the final copies of the annual Audit, which were approved at the December 2012 Foundation meeting.

**X. Executive Session:**

Mr. Parkowski indicated that there was a need for an Executive Session. **Mr. Vanderwende moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Robert Emerson. Motion unanimously approved.**

The Executive Session started at 9:02 a.m. The Executive Session ended at 9:28 a.m. **Mr. William Vanderwende moved that the Board go out of Executive Session, seconded by Robert Emerson. Motion unanimously approved.**

**XI. Other Business:**

**1. Wilson Farm**

Austin Short informed the Board that Mrs. Ellen Magee has not contacted Mr. Short concerning this matter yet.

**2. Round 17 Update**

This matter was discussed in Executive Session.

**3. Additional Items**

Chairman Garey mentioned that Jane Mitchell, one of our former Foundation Trustees, just passed away and if any Board members cared to donate a sum of money in her memory, they could do so to either the Grange or the Hospice.

Mike Parkowski mentioned a review of Foundation legislation and update to delete old legislation that no longer impacts on what is currently being done: housing allowance change to three dwellings and elimination of targeted growth zones.

Austin short informed the Board that the Department of Agriculture's **Joint Finance Committee (JFC) hearing is Thursday, February 7<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m., and the Department's Bond Bill hearing is Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 to 3:00 p.m.** Both hearings are at Legislative Hall. All Board members are encouraged to attend.

**XII. Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the Foundation the meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m. The next meeting of the Foundation will be held on February 20, 2013 at the Delaware Department of Agriculture beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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William Vanderwende  
Vice Chairman